



City of New Bedford
Scott W. Lang, Mayor

City of New Bedford
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P R E S S R E L E A S E

Route 18/JFK Highway Access Improvement Project Meeting

Tuesday, March 27th at 6:30PM at the New Bedford Main Library Branch Downtown

New Bedford, Massachusetts- An informational meeting on the status of the Route 18 access improvement project will be held on March 27th at 6:30pm at the New Bedford Main Library 3rd floor meeting room. The presentation will include a complete project history, current status, and schedule milestones for completing design and construction. The general public and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Background

In 1998 the city worked closely with Congressman Barney Frank to secure \$15 million in TEA-21 funding for the project. The City of New Bedford and MassHighway contracted with Fredric R. Harris (now DMJM-Harris) and its subcontractors (the Harris team) to work with a steering committee to design the project. The three principal objectives of the project were defined as: 1) improving roadway vehicular and pedestrian safety; 2) improving the visual quality of the roadway within the national park; and 3) significantly improving the safety and visual attractiveness of the pedestrian crossing function between downtown and the waterfront. This nine-month process led to a "master plan" for Route 18 that resulted in a 10 percent design concept of the road from Coggeshall Street to Cove Street. This design depicted the "surface alternative" as the preferred alternative and was submitted to MassHighway for the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) for review and evaluation. This submission (*Technical Memorandum 3, Alternatives Analysis*) was completed in May 2001. A scope of work for the project was agreed to between the city, MassHighway and DMJM Harris in 2005.

In January 2006 Mayor Scott W. Lang formed a project team to examine the current status of the project and propose a process for moving the project forward. This project team is made up of staff from key city departments, Waterfront Historic Area League (WHALE) and National Parks Service and several private and public stakeholders. The project team has worked closely with DMJM-Harris and MassHighway to refine the scope of work for the project. This partnership has ensured that the project objectives and design intent reflect what was envisioned in 2000-2001 conceptual design, while adapting to the actual conditions that exist in 2006. The revised scope was submitted in July 2006. MassHighway and FHA approved the final scope of work for the project in January 2007.

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